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January 21, 2025

Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair, Sponsors, and Members of the Committee
Health and Government Operations Committee
240 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
Re: House Bill 345 – Interstate Social Work Licensure Compact
Position- Support
Dear Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk :

I am writing to support the enactment of an Interstate Compact for Licensed Social Workers, with an emphasis on the Licensed Certified Social Worker- Clinical (LCSW-C), in other States the same designation of licensee may be referred to as Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW). This classification of licensee has independent statutory authority to evaluate, diagnose, and treat mental and emotional disorders and conditions, impairments and other cited authorities in Federal and State statutes and regulations. In my opinion there must be an objective, fact based, clinical assessment of competency among other requirements, including an understanding of clinical diagnosis, purpose of diagnosis, evaluative procedures, and Federal and State statutes and regulation requirements in the States in which the licensee practices. **Interstate Compacts have certain requirements to participate. However, the licensing criteria for obtaining a license, to engage in a profession, trade, or other activity is a component of the licensing authority, not the Interstate Compact. In Maryland, the criteria affecting the licensure of Social Workers rest with the Board of Social Work Examiners in the Health Occupations Article Title 19.** I support the enactment of a Social Work Interstate Compact which is consistent with the Interstate Compacts of other professions, trades, and activities (such as the Multistate Drivers License Compact) which have been enacted to allow for expansion of practice while protecting public interests.

Sincerely, signed electronically

Arthur Flax, LCSW-C, DCSW

Sincerely,

Arthur Flax, LCSW-C, LCPC, LCADC

State of Maryland Licensed Certified Social Worker- Clinical; Licensed Clinical Alcohol Drug Counselor, DHMH; Evaluator for the Workers Compensation Commission; Licensed Health Care Provider, HG-8-403 (HB-1510 enrolled bill -2014) in compliance with DHMH Behavioral Health Integration enacted statutes and regulations. Direct Pay Non-Attorney Advocate approved by the Social Security Administration.